

Rogue

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Summary: Israel is the seventh member of Angel Team, but things don't quite go as planned. Oneshot, backstory for character development.

Partner to Angels of Death; read that as well to understand the AU.

Rated T for brief nudity.

Rogue

Everything hurt.

That in and of itself was nothing new. Izzy was used to pain. It was part of his daily life, had been ever since they'd brought him here. He couldn't remember a day when he hadn't been hurting all over. There were flashes, from before, but so little remained in his memory now. He couldn't even remember what Mom and Pop looked like.

He barely ever remembered that he had known them.

Iz heard footsteps at the very edge of his range of hearing, and for a moment, he froze, then decided to pretend he was asleep. The lights were all out, which told him it was night time, and therefore he was expected to be sleeping.

The footsteps paused and a door opened. Then it shut again and whoever it was continued on their way. Another door opened and shut. They were doing rounds.

More time passed than Izzy had expected, before someone paused outside his door.

"Subject oh-seven-seven," the woman said.

Iz waited.

The door opened, and something made the woman step through and approach his bed – for this was much more bed-like than the cots they usually slept in.

"I know you're awake, oh-seven-seven."

Izzy turned over and glared at her balefully. He was hurting, he didn't want to talk.

"Your augmentation went well. Everything went according to plan. You still have a few changes to undergo â€" your eyes won't change color for a few more days, and your hair has to grow out; your senses will gradually improve over the next few months. You will notice that your reflexes are much faster and your perception of time has changed. You are much stronger, much faster, and your brain has been modified so that you use more of it, which will make you much smarter as well."

"The others?" Iz choked out, through a throat that burst into flames every time he breathed in.

"I'm sorry to say most of the others did not respond so well to the changes. There were also someâ€¦ unforeseen reactions. We believe something has awakened meta-DNA. Some of your brothers and sisters are crippled because of the meta-DNA's awakening, others died. So far seven others are still operational."

"Eightâ€¦ out of sixtyâ€¦ how could you, Doctor?"

"My projections were far more positiveâ€¦ they could not, however, predict this outcome. More than three quarters would have made it if not for their meta-DNA." Halsey sounded tired, but underneath that was a current of well-hidden anguish. Wellâ€¦ at least _someone_ was sorry.

Izzy's mind was going a million miles an hour. He knew he was going to be expected to serve the people who had done this to him and his brothers and sisters. Suddenly, he was furious. He pushed the feeling down. It would not do to cause chaos. He would simply slip awayâ€¦

"I'm sorryâ€¦ Doctor Halseyâ€¦ I'm just soâ€¦ tiredâ€¦" Iz closed his eyes and did his best to look as bushed as possible. It worked.

"Rest, Israel." Halsey slipped out, shutting the door behind her. Iz heard the bolt slide home. He was locked inâ€¦ but that wouldn't stop him. He waited, watching his internal clock tick over, and finally, at 0200, the facility fell into the deep silence that he had been waiting for.

Israel-077 slid out of bed, dressed quickly in fatigues, and took off his dog tags. Those, he laid on the bed. He scribbled a quick note apologizing to his brothers and sisters, slid that under the tags, and then turned to the door.

The hairpin he liked to keep in his cheek was still there. He spat it out and got to work on the lock, picking it quickly and easily. Then he opened the door, and silently ghosted through the halls, looking for the only exit.

As he slipped through that door, an alarm went off. Iz bolted for the nearest hiding place, a bush about fifty yards from the building, and crouched inside the plant, listening intently.

A soft snuffling by the kennels told him that the dog squad had been set to the task of tracking him already. Izzy bolted from his hidey-hole and scaled the fence, paying no heed to the sharp blades on the razor-wire. Blood streaked his arms and legs and stained the plain gray fatigues, but he didn't notice the pain.

He just ran.

* * *

><p>He was enormous. Aleksandr stared at the naked, frostbitten, unconscious young man, openly amazed. This guy had to be eight-four! And Alek was strong, but couldn't lift him, which meant he was damn heavy too. That wasn't a surprise given the fellow's size and build, but Alek thought perhaps he weighed a little too much for his size.<p>

"Sir," Alek's underling said. "General Romanov, sir. How do you expect to get him to the base?"

"I don't know," Alek growled at the diminutive man. "If that heavy lift gear isn't here STAT, I'll have to figure something out. But we're not leaving him here. This, Schmidt, is a Spartan."

"They ain't real!"

"Yes they are," Aleksandr Romanov, former ODST, snarled, his Russian accent growing more pronounced the angrier he got. "One of them killed some of my former comrades. This one's a little older, but unmistakably the same. I'd love to put a bullet in his brain right now, but can you imagine what a Spartan could do for the Liberation Front? We must think of the cause, not of personal vendettas."

There was a long pause, then Alek's underling stood a little straighter, looking too pleased. "The lift gear is on its way, sir! We will be out of here and back to the base by sundown."

"Good. No sense freezing our arses off out here."

* * *

><p>The Spartan wasn't sure whether to be grateful or angry that the rebels had helped him. He had been created to kill the very people with whom he now satâ€¦ but ONI had sent a few operatives after him, and when they'd tracked him down, they'd tried to kill him. He had gotten in first, despite being unarmed and woefully ill-equipped. Now he had a few weapons hidden in a cache up a tree, good ones. Specialist anti-Spartan weaponry.<p>

He could get his revenge on the people who had hurt him and killed so many of his brothers and sisters.

"What is your name, Spartan?" a Russian guy with only a fairly light accent demanded.

"Israel," the Spartan responded instinctively. He hadn't thought he even remembered his own name. It had been so long since anybody had used it. He was surprised that his own Rusko-Czech accent had returned; he hadn't said anything for years so he supposed some

reversion was natural.

"I'm giving you a choice, Israel," the man told him. "You can join us, or we can give you something to wear and leave you in the wilderness so you can live in peace."

Iz narrowed his eyes. Peace? Not with the rebellion here. Haven would be taken back by the UNSC soon enough, and ONI would find him and try to kill him again. "I will join you, but I will not fight Spartans."

Romanov chuckled. The sound came from deep in the Russian's chest. "We'll see about that. Watch this footage."

Israel did as he was told, frown deepening with every second. There was Nate, and Eli, Lin, Cas, Raph, Zeke. Six. Not seven, as there should have been had Halsey been telling the truth all those years ago.

The people his brothers and sister were killing were not armored at all, and only lightly armed. It made no difference. They killed without mercy, without pause.

"Those are civilians, Israel. Not members of the Liberation Front, but civilians who foolishly took up arms to protest the excessive taxes the UNSC imposes upon them. Humans make mistakes, it is in our nature, and the UNSC puts us down like dogs! Those who you call your brothers are the tip of the spear, and select the targets they are deployed to eliminate."

Iz couldn't watch any more. He looked at the floor, then started examining his frostbitten hands as if they were a new prototype sniper rifle. "What do you need me to do, Romanov?"

"General Romanov," the Russian corrected him. "I need you to utilize your skills for the cause. You will have your chance at your so-called 'brothers' when it suits our cause."

"I'm only a sniper, General, sir." Izzy slipped easily back into the structure of the military.

"Excellent," Romanov said with a predatory smile. "We need skilled snipers. Did you have a rank in the UNSC?"

"No," Israel said. "Not yet. Just a number. Oh-seven-seven. Sir."

"I want you to answer only to me, Spartan, therefore I bestow upon you the rank of Brigadier General and a family name. Do you remember the name you were born with?"

"No, sir."

"Then I shall give you one. From this day forth, you are Brigadier General Israel Dragunov. For you are Russian, are you not?"

"Yes, sir. Czech as well." Iz didn't know what else to say.

"Your orders for this point in time are simple. Recover from your frostbite, and test yourself on our facilities. Get your eye in on the firing range. We might give you some prisoners to practice on as

well, eventually. Dismissed."

"Yes, sir." Izzy saluted sharply â€" almost broke his hand on his forehead â€" and awaited Romanov's return salute. That came after the typical pause. Israel turned and left.

End
file.